

continued from front

cooperative effort to identify and build improvements and enhancements to the regional flood control system. “The recurring situation in Miami-Dade demanded that we put our pledge into action,” said Gutiérrez.

THE APPROACH: IDENTIFY “FIXES”

Various task forces and problem-solving groups were organized to attack the issue. The County Commission created a multi-agency Flood Management Task Force. The South Florida Water Management District

Relief is on the Way!

While no South Florida community can ever be totally “flood-proof,” these efforts will provide improvements for many Miami-Dade neighborhoods.

Action	Status
Raise canal bank	Completed Phase 1 in 60 days Completed Phase 2 in 90 days
Pumping Station S-25B	Completed in 8 months
Pumping Station S-26	Completed in 8 months
Impoundment Basin	Phase 1 under construction
Water flow improvements	Canal widening under way Dredging to begin

conducted an internal *After Irene Storm Assessment* to review operational actions, identify problem areas and recommend improvements. Federal, state and local emergency managers convened with the District, local governments and the private sector to coordinate mitigation solutions. The District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers created a technical team to, among other actions, develop hydrology models specific to the C-4 basin in order to identify issues and answers to water flow concerns.

“We had a common vision to work toward a speedy and effective resolution. We all had a stake in making this work.”

– REBECA SOSA  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Area U.S. Senators and Representatives worked to secure Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant money

and Florida’s Governor and Legislature worked to secure state funding to implement these projects.

THE SOLUTION: PRIORITIZE ACTIONS

A number of far-reaching recommendations evolved from the various partners. The consensus: provide relief to the worst-impacted areas first and develop a plan of action.

“The beauty of our collaborative approach was that we didn’t focus on just correcting one problem at a time. We worked as partners for everyone’s benefit.”

– JOSE “PEPE” DIAZ  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSIONER

The top priority was defined as the C-4 Tamiami Canal Basin Project (*which includes work on adjacent canals that directly impact flow within – and out of – the basin*). Improvements here would benefit the flood-plagued cities and neighborhoods of Sweetwater, Flagami, West Miami and Belen. Other cities and areas along the C-6 canal, including Doral, Hialeah, Hialeah Gardens, Medley, Miami Springs and Virginia Gardens, would also experience relief.

The key recommendations called for more proactive operational procedures combined with system enhancements designed to increase water flow and storage capacity by removing canal constrictions, raising the canal bank, building two new pumping stations, and constructing an impoundment basin.

STATUS: AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

The help and support of Florida’s Congressional delegation led to a \$50 million FEMA Project Impact Grant. At the state level, the Governor and Legislature earmarked more than \$40 million for local projects. The District has executed interlocal agreements with the county and municipalities totaling more than \$22 million for the design and construction of local flood control improvement projects.

The District implemented improvements to the primary canal system in record time. The Sweetwater berm project, completed in two

phases, raised the north side of the canal bank. The first pumping station (S-25B), projected to take two years to complete, was finished within eight months. The second facility (S-26) was also completed in an eight-month timeframe. Both pumping stations were designed, constructed and made operational ahead of schedule.

Phase one of the emergency impoundment basin – created to temporarily hold water when canal levels swell – is now under construction, with phase two set to begin in September.

“We often refer to ourselves as the SunPass team – maintaining our speed and forward momentum, without the typical bureaucratic impediments of stops and starts,” said Victor Powell, the District’s director of construction and engineering.

“It was critical that something be done to provide relief to Miami-Dade residents. The FEMA grant provided the funding necessary to help remedy the situation.”

– LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE

With these new facilities, the District can be more proactive in lowering canal levels in advance of forecasted heavy rain. Each pumping station is capable of moving 600 cubic feet per second, or 16 million gallons per hour. Additional canal conveyance improvements, including widening and dredging of the C-4 canal will provide even further enhancements when completed.

THE KEY TO SUCCESS: PARTNERSHIPS

Cultivating and promoting successful partnerships resulted in the fast-tracking of both the funding and construction of new facilities and operational improvements.

In fact, Todd Davidson of FEMA says his organization plans to use the C-4 project as a textbook example for future federal-state-local partnerships. “The way the various levels identified the issues and worked together toward a resolution was very impressive...and very effective. Miami-Dade County is a model for the rest of the country,” said Davidson.

Can We Talk Business?

The District welcomed 128 people from the business community to its headquarters in West Palm Beach in early April for an interactive event called “Let’s Talk Business.” During the two-hour open house, District staff gave presentations and answered questions about the agency’s functions, business practices, changes to the procurement process and current and upcoming solicitations.

“The workshop was very informative,” said Peggy JSingh, a public relations consultant from Fort Myers attending her first District business workshop. “It is great to meet the District procurement staff who are

helping me through the minority certification process to become a registered vendor,” she said. “It was also a great networking opportunity for me.”

“The interaction with District project managers and procurement staff at the workshop was great,” said Juanita Coar, certification and outreach director for the Florida Regional Minority Business Council in Delray Beach. “It gave me the opportunity to learn more about how to do business with the District and to take back and share with my affiliates.” The council fosters the advancement of minority economic development in Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Collier counties.

This was just one of several recent initiatives designed to ensure participation by all sectors of the business community – from small business vendors to prime consultants, including minority enterprises. The District routinely makes purchases or enters into

contracts with a variety of businesses and individuals for a broad spectrum of products and services.

The workshop attracted participants from across the state: 85 were registered vendors with the District, 26 Minority Business Enterprises, nine African-American firms, six Hispanic-American firms, two Asian-American firms, nine women-owned businesses, three state-registered small businesses and one federally registered small business. Quarterly business events update the business community about ongoing District initiatives and contracting opportunities.

For additional information on how to do business with the District, visit [www.sfwmd.gov](http://www.sfwmd.gov) and click on the “Procurement & Contracts” link or call the Procurement Department at (800) 432-2045, ext. 6391.

